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- 14 -

PC25131A

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 10 are pending.

Claims 1, 5, and 6 are currently amended.

Restriction/Election

In the Office Action, restriction under 35 U.S.C. § 121 to one of the inventions of groups I-VII, as defined therein, is required. Accordingly, Applicant hereby elects without traverse the invention of group II, claims 1-5, drawn to a combination comprising valdecoxib, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and an allosteric alkyne inhibitor of MMP-13 of Formula IC, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, as defined in claims 1-5, wherein exactly one of X_1 , X_2 , and X_3 is N, and the other two of X_1 , X_2 , and X_3 are C-R (not "C-R₆" as recited in the Office Action), and there is no fused tricyclic ring system (i.e., W_2 and W_1 are not taken together to form the diradical group W_2-W_1 of formula $W_3=X_4-N$), classified in class 544, subclass 279, for example.

Claim 1 is amended to delete non-elected subject matter. Claims 5 and 6 are amended to depend from claim 1. Claims 7-10 continue to depend from claim 6. Where claim 1 is subsequently found allowable, Applicant hereby requests rejoinder of claims 6-10 in accordance with the provisions of MPEP § 821.04 and withdrawal of the requirement for restriction between claim 1 and claims 6-10.

Conclusion

In view of the above remarks, Applicant requests consideration of claims 1-5 and, in the event that claim 1 is subsequently found allowable, consideration of claims 6-10.

Respectfully submitted,

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